



Council of Pacific Education Code of Ethics for the South Pacific

1.0 Preamble

The Code of Ethics (the “Code”) for teachers in the South Pacific region who are affiliated to the Council of South Pacific Education (COPE) is intended as an expression and an elaboration of the values and principles that are central to what it means to be a member of the teaching profession in the South Pacific region. The Code is aspirational and integral to good practice for teachers.

Teachers are committed to the attainment of the highest standards of professional service in the promotion of learning by those they teach; mindful of the learner’s dis/ability, cultural background, gender, age, and development.

The Code embodies and upholds the relevant UN conventions, EI declaration on professional ethics, and the appropriate South Pacific regional frameworks and laws on education, with a view to supporting, sustaining, and delivering quality public education to all in the South Pacific region.

As an aspirational document, the Code does not include sanctions or other provisions relating to enforcement of its principles and precepts. However, it is envisaged that members of the teaching profession will adopt and promote the values and principles which are embodied in the Code.

Teacher training institutions, employers, and governments have an obligation to provide professional development and training to support the values and principles of this Code.

2.0 Rationale

The South Pacific Teacher Code of Ethics provides a formal framework of ideas and ideals to guide, inspire, and encourage teachers to achieve and maintain high standards of ethical and professional behaviour in all their work as teachers in the schools and other educational institutions in the South Pacific region.

3.0 Purpose

The Code:

- 3.1 promotes the values that guide teacher conduct and practice in order to facilitate child-friendly, inclusive, and safe environments;
- 3.2 delivers collaborative relationships that promote children’s learning and development;
- 3.3 supports collegiality amongst the members of the profession;
- 3.4 promotes public confidence in the teaching profession; and
- 3.5 provides teachers with an affirmation of their work and value in the South Pacific contexts.

4.0 Values

- 4.1 Those who enter the profession of teaching in the South Pacific region shall:
- a. value the role of families and parents as first teachers;
 - b. celebrate the intrinsic worth of each child in the communities of the South Pacific region;
 - c. respect elders and community leaders;
 - d. promote, preserve, maintain, and be educated in South Pacific cultures, languages, and the environment; and
 - e. uphold the ideals of dignity, humility, integrity, equity, justice, peace, democracy, responsible care, honesty and truth as they resonate in South Pacific region communities.

5.0 Principles

The teaching profession and the communities they serve have an expectation of high standards of ethical behaviour from all teachers. Members of the teaching profession in the South Pacific region are committed to:

5.1 Responsibility

- a. the interests and wellbeing of students;
- b. quality education for all students;
- c. on-going professional development and improving teaching and learning strategies;
- d. honesty and truthfulness with each other and ourselves;
- e. the rights of citizenship and democratic freedoms;
- f. collegial engagement in the best interests of students; and
- g. leadership in all levels of the teaching profession.

5.2 Dignity and Respect

- a. personal responsibility for our actions and judgements;
- b. appropriate professional relationships;
- c. diversity, care, and compassion;
- d. students and their family backgrounds;
- e. the central role of families and communities in education; and

f. due care, diligence, and confidentiality.

5.3 Social Justice

a. anti-discrimination and preventing the abuse of power;

b. defending the entitlements of all teachers;

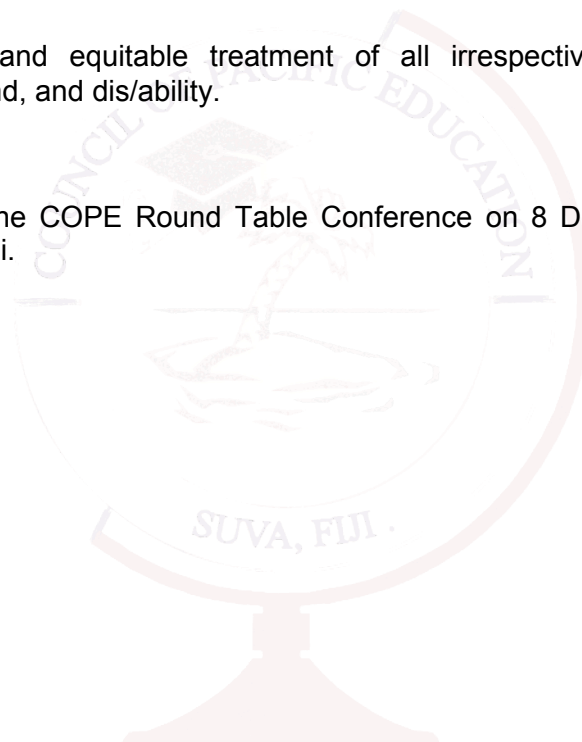
c. values consistent with human rights obligations;

d. supportive and fair workplaces;

e. democratic principles and peace; and

f. inclusive and equitable treatment of all irrespective of age, gender, cultural background, and dis/ability.

Written and endorsed by the COPE Round Table Conference on 8 December 2010 at the Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, Fiji.



Implementation Strategies for the Council of Pacific Education

Code of Ethics for the South Pacific

f. Preparing educational institutions for the implementation of the Code of Ethics (the “Code”). The Code:

- needs to be translated into the language of the country; and
- in English needs to contain a glossary of terms.

g. Materials for workshops

- Each union will select their trainers and provide training for the trainers.
- Participants to be given the training materials prior to training.
- Code of Ethics and training to be owned by the teachers.
- Each union will develop a training pack for the trainers that will contain:
 - the Code;
 - trainer notes; and
 - a poster of the Code.
- The workshop will vary in time from a half day, a whole day or a 2 hour sessions on two different days during school and/or after school or other arrangements.
- The workshop should have a section focused on a discussion around “What is a Code of Ethics” followed by the actual code.
- Practices of the Pacific should be used at the workshop such as encouraging attendance with food.
- This would also be seen as a recruitment opportunity.

h. Outcomes

When presenting the Code of Ethics the expected outcomes would be a:

- change in teachers’behaviour
- commitment to the profession
- change in the attitudes of teachers

- d. much happier and safe environment
- e. better learning environment
- f. improved academic achievement
- g. place where teachers and students want to be.

i. Review

At the next COPE meeting there should be a review that considers any feedback.

j. PREPARING UNIONS TO PLAY AN EMPOWERING ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING THE CODE OF ETHICS

Governing bodies of unions need to have ownership of this Code. If they already have existing codes these need to be assessed in relation to the COPE Code.

k. GOVERNING BODIES OF EACH UNION:

Delegates to this roundtable to report to their governing bodies:

Talk about EI Declaration,

Provide other countries' codes especially the ones that are similar demographically to their own, and discuss the outcomes of the roundtable.

For those unions who already have codes, reflect on /compare their own to the COPE document and fill in the gaps.

For unions who do not have codes, decide on how they will adapt the code for their own or write their own.

Use the resource "How to write a code of ethics' provided by the General-Secretary

Get commitment to the writing and funding of a code of ethics from the Governing Body

Review existing code OR

Write new code

Decide on the consultation process, how the code will be written/or reviewed. Then decide on how the code will be rolled out to educational institutions.

l. BRANCH LEVEL

- Governing Bodies to convene consultative meeting with the branch executives
- Training workshops for members /teachers
- General membership endorsement required

m. EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Staff of each educational institution to review the code of ethics and adjust to the context of the institution

- Educational institution to decide on plan of action (schedule training/meetings) for implementation of the code of ethics

COPE to provide the South Pacific Code of Ethics to Forum education ministers' meeting for their information.

n. MONITORING AND EVALUATION: CODE OF ETHICS AND CHILD PROTECTION AT INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL:

Each educational institution to convene a code of ethics teachers' consultative committee to monitor and evaluate.

The Committee should consist of teachers and other members of the community to be appointed by teachers such as a member each from village elders, school principal, students, parents, community leaders, and the union. The committee is owned by teachers.

Functions of committee:

- to provide awareness programmes;
- to consult;
- to counsel;
- to resolve;
- to evaluate and;
- to provide mechanisms for self appraisal/peer appraisal/student appraisal.

o. SUSTAINABILITY – INCLUSION INTO TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME

Union:

- Part of the decision-making body to any new change
- Union representative to make presentations on legal matters including the code of ethics
- Use resources developed by other unions
- Develop a framework for teacher training institutions to assist in providing modules for incoming trainees

Tertiary Institutions:

- Cross programme approach to be taken in teachers' colleges
- Pre- requisite before entry into training college
- Stand alone module at training college linking to tertiary module

- Module to be compulsory and to include background to Code
- Human resources staff to provide key representatives talking about the legal implications through the use of the code of ethics

Pacific Association of Teacher Educators

Code to be part of the PATE members' professional development and research.

Government:

- COPE-SP COE should be included in the teacher education curriculum:
- Professional development for all teachers already in schools (experienced and beginning teachers).
- 2 modules – pre-service and in-service for untrained teachers
- FEDMM- Forum Education Ministers' Meeting

Non Government:

- COPE:SP COE to be given to the Ministers' forum
- Non-Government schools need to be contacted and included

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